A Small Guide to Panchakarma

गुरोरधीताखिल वैद्यविद्य:
पीयूषपाणी कुशल: क्रियासु ।
गतस्पृहो धैर्यवर कृपालु
शुधोधिकारी भिषगीदृश: स्यात् ॥

Guroradhitakhila Vaidya Vidya
Peeyoosha pani, Kusala Kriyasu
Gataspruho Dhairyavara Kripalu,
Sudho adhikari Bhishageedrisa: Syat

A physician should be one who has acquired from his Guru, the knowledge of all medicines, who is gifted, who is efficient in his work, who is not shy, who is courageous, who has compassion and one who is pure at heart.

FOODS TO AVOID COMPLETELY

- Dairy products – milk, curd, chai, butter, etc. These foods clog the channels and inhibit detoxification
- Fried foods
- Sugar
- Tea, coffee, stimulants
- Very spicy food
- Cold items – ice cream, soda, water and juice
- Eggs, cheese and soy products
- Peanuts and peanut butter
- All wheat and yeast – uppama, bread, pasta, cookies, muffins, cakes, etc.
- Raw foods
- *Vata* inducing vegetables – cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, chickpeas
- Nightshade vegetables – potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, capsicum (green pepper) and mushrooms

Note: The above food recommendations are general guidelines and are not specific to dosha types. You may have to alter some of these to fit your dosha and your body's individual needs. Please consult with your Ayurveda practitioner.

The book Health and Consciousness Through Yoga and Ayurveda by Dr. Nibodhi offers further information on Panchakarma, foods specific to dosha, dinacharya (daily routine) and paschatkarma (advice to continue your healthy lifestyle when your treatments are complete).

The seva staff at Amma's Wellness Center at the Seashore building are also available to answer general questions.

The Western café and canteen are not designed to provide for those doing *Panchakarma*. If you eat there, it's best to just have kitchari and plain cooked vegetables at lunch. Specific PK meals are not available.

FOODS THAT ASSIST THE PURIFICATION PROCESS

- Foods that are light and easy to digest
- *Kitchari* (mung dhal and basmati rice cooked with ghee and mild digestive spices)
- Steamed vegetables or a mild vegetable soup
- Drink a minimum of 2 liters of water daily to help flush out the toxins
- Fresh young coconut water
- Herbal teas: tulasi, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, ccf tea(cumin, coriander, fennel),etc. according to your *dosha*
- Take ghee with food, *Kapha dosha*-1tsp., *Pitta dosha*-1.5 tsp. and *Vata dosha*-1Tbl. per meal maximum
- Raggi or Oat porridge
- Plain *idly* or *dosa*
- *Kanji* (rice water)

FOODS TO EAT IN MODERATION

- Limit intake of orange, pineapple and high acid fruit juices - all juices should be taken "special," (no sugar)
- Buttermilk is okay once or twice a week
- Limit nuts (almonds raw, soaked and peeled- only 10 per day), no nuts for *Pitta dosha*
- Limit salty and pungent (garlic, onions, chili) foods
- Limit sour foods (pickles, vinegar, citrus)

Panchakarma comprises five basic treatments that serve as a cleansing and detoxification process. In Sanskrit, "panch" means five and "karma" means action. These five actions are deep cleansing techniques that form the basis of the detoxification process. They are supported and enhanced by secondary treatments such as steam bath therapy, intake of medicated ghee, and oil baths.

This booklet has been designed to guide you through the panchakarma treatment during the next weeks.

There are some common guidelines everyone should follow to get the best effect from your panchakarma:

ॐ During your treatment, you must completely avoid doing seva and all physical work.
ॐ Refrain from all mental activity, such as reading and writing.
ॐ For all the modalities, the doctor insists that you do not sleep during the day. (Sleeping increases the toxins in the body and makes one tamasic, heavy.)
ॐ Cover your head and do not go under fans or into air-conditioned rooms.
ॐ Avoid sun, rain and wind, including air currents at the beach and rooftops.
ॐ Do not eat ice cream or have cold drinks.
ॐ Do not drink tea, chai, coffee or any caffeine.
ॐ Follow the food recommendations listed in the back of this booklet.
ॐ Do not travel outside the ashram premises in a rickshaw or taxi during treatment because any travel, other than walking, can make you ill.

ॐ Take a shower kit to your treatments (towel, shampoo, soap, etc.) and shower at the Vishuddhi clinic, not in the cold water from your room.
ॐ The ashram laundry service is available for your use.
ॐ Ladies, you should not receive treatment during your menses.
ॐ Men are requested to wear a dhoti for their massages, which will be provided at the men's clinic.
ॐ It is harmful to travel directly after panchakarma. Allow for 7-10 days minimum before leaving the ashram. Several weeks is best.

The panchakarma treatments at Vishuddhi Clinic are briefly described below along with specific guidelines for each treatment:

1. Snehana

During this 7-8 day period, according to the constitution of each patient, you will have to take a dose of medicinal ghee every morning. It is good to take the ghee around 5-6 A.M. so that by the time you take breakfast around 8-9 in the morning, it is already digested. If your stomach feels heavy, it is better to avoid breakfast and just drink warm water or herbal teas. You can also take a pinch of salt in your ghee that helps to digest it if you feel heavy. The aim of this treatment is to regenerate the body through a protective film that envelops the cell tissues and the internal organs. In fact, every cell of the nervous system, every muscle and each organ is protected by a minute film. This oily film is regenerated by absorption of the ghee. All the joints also receive the protection. The ghee will also have the function of absorbing all the toxins that have been stored in the body. Thus, the coatingaction of the ghee will eliminate the toxins from the organs and will help to detoxify the entire body.

is also used to treat eye problems. For best results, it is advised to shave the head every 3 days. It gives deep relaxation to the nervous system.

Please note :
ॐ It's important to go directly to your room after Shirovasti and rest on your bed for 30- 45 Minutes. Be in silence for this time so that the effect of the treatment doesn't get disturbed. Don't read or listen to music.

3. Netra Tharpana

This treatment is recommended for certain eye problems. It stimulates the optical nerves and considerably improves eyesight. For a period of 9 days, during either morning or evening (in order to avoid the heat of the sun), the patient is treated with ghee and medicinal herbs. One must wear dark glasses immediately after the treatment and throughout the day.
Please note:
ॐ Don't expose your eyes to any wind or fans.
ॐ Don't read or use your eyes to much for 2 hours.

PANCHAKARMA FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

The ideal diet to support *Panchakarma* consists of light, nourishing and easily digestible foods such as cooked vegetables and *kitchari* (see below).
It is best to avoid eating after 6 pm, as the body's digestive fire is lower at this time. Food consumed at night goes undigested, forming *ama* (toxins). If it is necessary, take *kunji* (rice water) or vegetable broth.

9. Swedana

This is a medicated steam bath. You will sit in a steam tent for this treatment. *Swedana* helps dilate the sinus passages (necessary before *nasya*) and open the pores. This helps to evacuate the toxins and facilitates the absorption of medicines as it opens up the srotas (channels) of the body.

Please note:

ॐ After the treatment go to your room and rest for 30 minutes, in silence if possible.

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The treatments described below are not traditionally part of Panchakarma but are available along with your Panchakarma treatments at the Vishuddhi Clinic.

1. Shirodhara

Milk or oil (depending on client's constitution) is poured continuously by a vessel with a cloth wick onto the forehead for a timed period. This treatment greatly helps *vata* problems of insomnia, mental and nervous system disturbances and increases relaxation.

Please note:

ॐ It's important to go directly to your room after Shirodhara and rest on your bed for 30- 45 Minutes. Be in silence for this time so that the effect of the treatment doesn't get disturbed. Don't read or listen to music.

2. Shirovasthi

Initially, the head will be shaved and for 7 days, warm oil will be poured gently onto the top of the head for a period of 45 minutes (3 x 15 min. sessions). *Shirovasthi* helps relieve insomnia, regulate neurological and psychological problems and

Snehanam helps to improve the quality of your sleep, to improve intestinal function and elimination, and to eliminate stress.

2. Vamana

After taking the ghee, the clinic staff will support the patient in the emesis (vomiting) treatment which serves to free the body of the toxins which have been absorbed by the ghee taken in the previous week. *Vamana* is beneficial for all problems of congestion, fever, migraines and accumulation of toxins in the system especially in the stomach. The therapeutic effects of this process work on the plasma, stomach, sinuses, lungs and the entire lymphatic system.

Please note:

ॐ On the day you take *Vamana,* do not eat solid food. Take only water (hot water if possible), coconut water and kanji water with some salt.

3. Nasya

This treatment takes 7 days. It is administered in the evening at the beginning of sunset when the ambient temperature is fresher. You will receive a short steam bath and medicinal oils through the nostrils.

The nose is connected with the brain and lungs. Upon a light massage of the skull, this oil will irrigate to affect the entire nervous system, the sinuses, throat, thyroid gland, as well as the neck and shoulders. *Nasya* eliminates mucous and improves mental clarity.

Please note:

ॐ Take your cup and handkerchiefs to each Nasya treatment.
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ॐ Don't wash your hair for 2 hours after Nasya and avoid anything cold on your head.
ॐ Don't read or use your eyes too much for 2 hours.

4. Abhyanga

This is a traditional, light massage using medicinal oil. It reduces Vata and Pitta and assists the body in moving out toxins through the lymphatic system. It makes the skin soft and the mind clearer and more alive. *Abhyanga* is especially recommended for people who do heavy physical work. This treatment also helps people with insomnia.

5. Pizhichil

This is a medicinal oil bath received for 7 days. Two practitioners simultaneously bathe the body in warm oil accompanied by a light massage in unison. *Pizhichil* is helpful for people suffering from joint problems and neurological problems, and it also relaxes the muscles. It detoxes the body, even from heavy metals, on a deep level to all tissue layers. It is a heating treatment, and if you sweat and feel warm, it helps to move the toxins through the pores.

6. Navakizhi

This is a gentle massage with a mixture of rice and medicinal herbs wrapped into a bolus and applied all over the body. This treatment is very good for neurological problems, paralysis, muscular problems and weak muscles. It is also recommended to cool and regulate the body temperature.

7. Virechan

Virechan is an oral purgative treatment. It will help to cleanse the whole intestinal system. It is excellent for patients

with an excess of *pitta* in the small intestine, liver, gall bladder, spleen and blood. This treatment is given at least 10 days before *Vasthi* in order to prepare the intestines. Allow time for rest in your room after the treatment as it can be tiring.

Please note!

ॐ Do not eat too much the evening before and the evening you have the virechan treatment; you could take kanji (rice soup) with a few non-spicy vegetables. If you had pain or cramps, take only plain Kanji with some salt.
ॐ Warm water is to be drunk every 30 minutes (flask provided by clinic), and broken rice kanji will be given to complete the treatment**. You must eat at least 5 hours after taking the morning medicine**.

8. Nirooha and Annwasan Vasthi

This treatment flushes out the toxins stores in the large intestine. It helps eliminate, control and regulate *vata* which causes illnesses such as chronic constipation, gout, arthritis, sciatica and eases menopause.

Please note!

ॐ It is important to eat lightly before the Annwasan Vasthi (Oil Vasthi) so that the oil can get better absorbed. Do not eat at all, or only very lightly before the Nirooha Vasthi (Big Vasthi) because you flush out your colon, and it should not be in the digestive process. You can drink a lot before and after the Vasthis, and the best is warm water or herbal teas.
ॐ Do not eat raw food, bread or food containing potato, cauliflower, cabbage, chickpeas, etc. for a few days before and during the 8 days of vast. These foods can create gas in the intestine which could make the treatment painful.